



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY  
DIVISION OF FIRE STANDARDS & TRAINING AND  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

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**Richard A. Mason  
Director**

November 2005

Fire Service of New Hampshire:

Enclosed with the mailing this month are materials describing an exciting new program that could provide you with additional staff for your department at a very attractive cost. It is called the "Emergency Response Corps" (ERC) and is part of an AmeriCorps program that has been operating successfully in Maine for the past two years. The agency that operates the program won a competitive planning grant from Washington to look at expanding to other rural states like New Hampshire and Vermont.

I have met with the staff of this program and see some real benefits in helping many of you who are having problems recruiting new firefighters and emergency response personnel. In short, ERC can be a solution in meeting your increased staffing needs without costing your department or town much money.

If you are interested, I urge you to please read the attached materials describing how ERC works. If you could also complete the attached survey and send it back to me it will be helpful to the operators to refine the program based on unique needs of New Hampshire departments. If you have additional questions or think you might be interested in participating, please go to their website at [www.trcme.com](http://www.trcme.com) and click on AmeriCorps Programs. Finally, if you would like to talk directly to a fire chief that is using the program please call Chief Bill St. Michel of the Durham (Maine) Fire and Rescue Department. His phone number is 207.353.6269 x21

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard A. Mason".

Richard A. Mason, EFO, CFO  
Director

## Planning Grant to expand Emergency Response Corps AmeriCorps Program!

The Emergency Response Corps (ERC) was chosen to receive an AmeriCorps Planning Grant that will lay the ground work for the expansion of the ERC to New Hampshire. The ERC has been helping Fire and Rescue

departments in Maine for two years. Our initial research has shown that this program would be valuable to address the growing shortage of volunteers in rural emergency response departments. This program expansion would bring significant resources to NH in the form of a large operating grant that includes funding opportunities and the recruitment of potentially hundreds of qualified paid volunteers to assist local fire and EMS departments.



### Introduction to the Emergency Response Corps

The ERC was created to help address the shortage of volunteers in rural Maine. This growing shortage threatens their ability to respond to local emergencies. ERC places AmeriCorps Members (often recruited from within the community) with Fire Departments and Ambulance Services to:

- Recruit and retain emergency response volunteers
- Increase available manpower for emergency response
- Enhance public safety education initiatives
- Provide additional community service activities

Chief Bill St. Michel of Durham Fire and Rescue (Maine) has had an ERC AmeriCorps Member for the past 9 months. He selected an existing volunteer with his department to become his Member. By adding this extra staffing they were able to become a transporting ambulance service. Chief St. Michel has offered to take phone calls from interested departments if you would like to learn more about how it worked for him. His phone number is 207.353.6269 x21 or e-mail [durhamchief@suscom-maine.net](mailto:durhamchief@suscom-maine.net)

The ERC currently has 8 full time AmeriCorps Members serving in rural Maine Fire Departments and Ambulance Services. A department provides \$6,000 to the ERC. The Emergency Response Corps provides Members with a comprehensive benefits package for a 1700 hour commitment including:

- \$10,600 in pay
- \$4,725 in an AmeriCorps education scholarship
- Health benefits
- Workers Compensation coverage
- Training opportunities
- Student loan forbearance
- Child care reimbursement if income eligible

The ERC is a program of the Training Resource Center.

### Contact information

Billye Senecal, Emergency Response Corps, Program Coordinator. Phone: 207.491.4915

E-mail: [Billye.senecal@trcme.com](mailto:Billye.senecal@trcme.com) Fax: attn. Billye Senecal 207.772.0836

Website: [www.trcme.com](http://www.trcme.com) and follow links to ERC



Emergency Response Corps would like to determine if the numbers of volunteers in the New Hampshire Fire Service has changed in recent years. By answering the following questions you will provide data that will help us document any changes. We greatly appreciate you taking the time to fill out this questionnaire and will keep you informed of the findings of this survey.

1. How many volunteer members were on your department roster 10 years ago?

2. How many volunteers are on your current roster?

3. On average, how many of your volunteers show up to a daytime call?

A night-time or weekend call?

4. In the past year, have you had to request mutual aid because of low volunteer response?

How many times in the past 5 years?

5. How many community service activities does your department participate in or host each year?

How many volunteers participate on average?

6. Does your department offer any public education activities?

If yes, how many volunteers participate on average?

7. How many public education presentations do you do yearly?

8. How many additional volunteer hours could your department use per year?

9. What other needs for staffing does your department have?

10. Does your department have a need for a full-time firefighter and/or EMT?

11. Would your department have any interest in having an opportunity to participate in the Emergency Response Corps AmeriCorps program? It is a federally-funded program to provide emergency response staffing in your community through a cost-sharing arrangement. We would like to determine department/community interest for potential grant expansion.

To find out more about the Emergency Response Corps, please see the information attached here and/or feel free to contact the Emergency Response Corps staff. We will be glad to answer any questions you have.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed survey to: Bureau Chief Dennis Rosolen, New Hampshire Fire Academy, 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03305
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